



Protecting the Environment, Safeguarding the Future: Electrification of Our Forklift Truck Fleet

As a leading clinical waste disposal company, Stericycle relies on forklift trucks to safely and efficiently move waste around our UK sites. But an aging fleet of fossil-fuelled vehicles presented safety and cost issues, and was not sustainable. Could a long-term way to lower costs and carbon emissions be found, which also fulfilled the stringent operational criteria demanded of our vehicles?

Senior Strategic Sourcing Analyst Rick Abel and his procurement team conducted a deep dive into alternative power sources for the trucks. It quickly became clear that the future of the fleet lay in electrification.

"The move to electrification has helped us to standardise our fleet and improve data visibility across our sites. We now have a sustainable solution with all forklifts operating at consistent speed limits with safeguards in place and an issue tracking system"

Rick Abel,
Senior Strategic Sourcing Analyst



An Innovative Solution

Several leading vendors were interviewed during the tender process, but the best solution for us was offered by STILL Materials Handling. They were invited to our sites across the UK, speaking to staff on the ground, understanding the culture and identifying potential challenges and opportunities in electrification.

From this research, a number of new and innovative features were introduced. Not only was cost and sustainability prioritised, but so was the safety of team members:

- **Consent switches** - each user must log in to a truck via a unique user ID, and complete pre-shift checks before an operation can commence.
- **Warning zone lighting** - two strips of light projected to each side of the truck to warn nearby pedestrians
- **Mandatory seatbelts** - forklifts cannot be started without a seatbelt being worn
- **Enhanced charging infrastructure** - charging outlets protected with dust covers, and charging cables automatically retracted.

A Sustainable Solution

Here at Stericycle, we always strive to be responsible stewards of the environment, and champions for sustainability. It was clear early on that fleet electrification meant a sizeable carbon offset - calculated at **737 tonnes** over the course of the 5 year contract. Almost all trucks have now been electrified, and all are monitored by a leading fleet management software system.

In addition, the move has helped us to reduce costs, releasing further investment in our operations.

"Rolling out a forklift fleet electrification in just 12 months was a real team effort. The project brought teams together across our company and gave us access to enhanced data that's helping drive greater efficiency, consistency and safety in how we operate every day."

Caitlin Lawrence,
Engineering Project Coordinator

Three Key Benefits of an Electric Forklift Fleet:



INCREASED SAFETY

A huge amount of time and energy was invested in training staff at all sites, refreshing their safety knowledge, familiarising them with the new vehicle safeguards and charging infrastructure, and introducing them to the fleet management system.



REDUCED CARBON EMISSIONS

Stericycle sustainability credentials are critical to our reputation and our customer's success; electrification of trucks was the logical next step in our sustainability journey. There were, understandably, some initial concerns over electrification - especially around battery life. But exhaustive testing of demo machines, and the use of "opportunity charging" means battery life isn't an issue.



ENHANCED EFFICIENCY

Using digital fleet management software, we are now harnessing more and better data than ever before. The platform allows us to see how efficient each truck is, any issues which have arisen, and send messages to individual drivers as required. Pen-and-paper vehicle checks are a thing of the past, replaced by digital, automatic checks fleet-wide.

*Stericycle's compliance-based solutions protect people and brands, promote health and well-being, and safeguard the environment. **Together with our customers, we protect what matters.***

For more information, visit stericycle.co.uk or call [0330 173 6401](tel:03301736401)